GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
COAL
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2467
ANSWERED ON:16.03.2017
Unscientific Coal Mining
Usendi Shri Vikram

Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state:

(a) Whether it is a fact that vast area of coal mining in the country is becoming dangerous due to unscientific methods used for coal mining;
(b) if so, the details thereof;
(c) the number of accidents reported in various coal mines in the country during the last three years and the current year;
(d) Whether the Government has taken remedial measures to check unscientific coal mining in the country; and
(e) If so, the details thereof?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) IN THE MINISTRY OF COAL, POWER, NEW AND RENEWABLEE ENERGY AND MINES (SHRI PIYUSH GOYAL)

(a)&(b): It is not a fact that vast area of coal mining in the country is becoming dangerous due to unscientific methods used for coal mining. However, some part of the Jharia coalfield (JCF) and Raniganj coalfield (RCF) within the leasehold of Bharat Coking Coal Limited (BCCL) & Eastern Coalfields Limited (ECL) subsidiaries of Coal India Ltd (CIL) respectively are declared dangerous and susceptible to fire and subsidence because of the unscientific mining carried out by the erstwhile private mine owners prior to nationalization of the coal mines in the early 1970s.
(c) As reported by the Directorate General of Mines Safety (DGMS), the number of accidents reported in various coal mines in the country during the last three years and the current year are as under:

Year	Number of Accidents	
	Fatal	Serious
2014	59	379
2015	53	283
2016	70	257
2017	4	16

Data up to 31.01.2017. Data for the year 2016 & 2017 are provisional.

(d)&(e): The following remedial measures have been taken to check unscientific coal mining in the country:

1.0 Safety, welfare and health of workers employed in mines are regulated by the Mines Act, 1952 and the Rules and Regulations framed thereunder. These are administered by the Directorate-General of Mines Safety (DGMS), under the Ministry of Labour & Employment.

In order to ensure that the mine workers are provided with adequate safety measures while working in the mines, officers of DGMS undertake inspections of mines and take following measures:

â€¢ Pointing out contraventions
â€¢ Withdrawal of permission
â€¢ Issue of improvement notices
â€¢ Prohibition of employment
â€¢ Informal stoppages
â€¢ Prosecution in the court of law

2.0 The following additional measures are also taken by DGMS:

(i) To promote and propagate safety awareness in mines, National Safety Awards (Mines), National Conference on Safety in Mines is organized by DGMS. The recommendations of National Conference on Safety in Mines go a long way in enhancing safety of mine workers.
(ii) Workers participation and sensitization in matters of safety are ensured through training in safety and by initiatives like celebration of safety week and safety campaigns, etc.
(iii) Safety training programmes are organized among Managers and Supervisors for improving safety standards in mines.
(iv) Facilitates introduction of Risk Assessment Techniques aimed at elimination of risks and to ensure safety of workmen.
(v) Facilitates introduction of standard operating procedures to avoid unsafe practices in mines.
(vi) Time to time, DGMS Circulars are issued as guidelines for safer operations.

In addition to above, the following steps are also being taken to avoid unscientific mining and recurrence of accidents and to improve safety in coal mines.

(i) Safety audit of all the coalmines has been taken up.
(ii) Strengthening of Internal Safety Organisations (ISO) in coalmines/coal companies.
(iii) CIL has taken up a training programme with Safety in Mines Testing and Research Station (SIMTARS) of Govt of Queensland, Australia for training of trainers.
(iv) A special safety awareness campaign has been launched to increase awareness of mine workers. i.e., 'Safety is My Responsibility' and steps have been taken to propagate the same.
(v) Risk based inspection system through Shram Suvidha Portal has been implemented for coal mines and for metal mines is under progress.
(vi) Adoption of online safety monitoring systems, establishment of geo-technical cells, installation of gas chromatographs for monitoring and analysing underground mine gases, installation of proximity warning devices to avoid collision of heavy earth moving machinery, environmental tele-monitoring systems in all degree-III gassy mines, slope monitoring systems for overburden benches and OB dumps etc. are some of the other important steps taken by coal companies for improving safety of miners and mining operations in the coal mines.

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